AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application. Claims 1-8, 10-12, 14-19, 23-25, 39-46 have been amended herein.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A personal shopping system for servicing customers at shopping establishment and remote locations over at least one communications network, the shopping system comprising:

at least one point-of-sale (POS) system located in the shopping establishment;

at least one establishment or remotely located portable shopping terminal ~~for acquiring~~ that acquires shopping related data;

one or more proximity sensors that monitor customer activity in product sales areas in the shopping establishment; and

a centrally located controller ~~for communicating~~ that communicates with the POS system, the at least one shopping terminal and the proximity sensors via the at least one network, ~~processing~~ processes the shopping related data, and ~~controlling~~ controls shopping transactions engaged in by the customers, ~~wherein~~ the at least one shopping terminal is a bar code storage device ~~for reading~~ that reads bar codes from a hardcopy source, ~~storing~~ stores the bar codes, and ~~transferring~~ transfers the bar codes to the controller over the at least one network, the controller including at least one computer executable instruction that generates a theft condition upon expiration of a time period that starts after receipt of a signal from the proximity sensor.

2. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, the portable terminal comprising an elongated pen-shaped housing having an end with an optically transparent passage there through that enables bar codes to be read.

3. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, the portable terminal comprising:

a housing having a generally elongated rectangular design which fits into user's hand, the housing having a front surface, a back surface, a top surface, a bottom surface and two side surfaces;

a touch sensitive display disposed on the front surface;

a plurality of buttons disposed on the front surface wherein each of the buttons is associated with at least one user function or application upon activation;

a bar code reader ~~for reading~~ that reads bar codes, the bar code reader ~~having~~ including a visible light source ~~for displaying~~ that displays the area of reading for the bar code reader upon activation of a bar code reading function on the portable terminal, the bar code reader being configured to transmit the visible light away from the top surface of the portable terminal's housing such that the light is visible to the user holding the portable terminal; and

at least two bar code activation buttons located on the two side surfaces of the housing such that the user's hand ~~is supporting~~ supports the portable terminal from the bottom and side surfaces of the portable terminal upon activation of the bar code reader with either of the bar code activation buttons, ~~whereby~~ the user can view the display and the visible light source upon activation of either of the bar code activation buttons.

4. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 3, ~~wherein~~ the portable terminal further comprises a touch sensitive area within the touch sensitive display ~~for receiving~~ that receives data inputs from a stylus pen.

5. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 3, ~~wherein~~ the portable terminal further comprises an information key ~~for allowing~~ that allows a user to display product information.

6. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the controller comprises inference means for deriving a shopping profile for the customer.

7. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the at least one shopping terminal comprises means for converting any currency amount to and from a corresponding Euro amount.

8. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the at least one shopping terminal is coupled to a telephone line and the shopping terminal comprises means for providing secure and silent communications ~~when transferring~~ to transmit data to and from the shopping terminal without notifying or disturbing a user.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the bar code storage device comprises:

an egg-shaped housing;

a bar code reader ~~for reading~~ that reads bar codes from a hardcopy source, the bar code reader ~~having~~ including a visible light indicator ~~for indicating~~ that indicates the scanning status of the bar code reader and at least one bar code activation button located on the top surface of the bar code storage device ~~for activating~~ that activates the bar code reader;

memory storage mean coupled to the bar code reader for storing the bar codes; and

communication means for transferring the bar codes to the controller over the at least one network.

11. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the at least one shopping terminal comprises a scanning system comprising a wearable computer processor and a wearable scanning device in communication with the computer processor.

12. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 11, ~~wherein~~ the scanning system further comprises a headset having a speaker and a miniature display device ~~for providing~~ a that provides audio, graphical and video information.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the controller means for controlling the transaction processing and the operation of the POS system and the at least one shopping terminal[[;]] comprises:

means for communicating with at least one shopping terminal located within the shopping establishment;

means for communicating with at least one remotely located shopping terminal outside the shopping establishment via a telephone;

means for communicating voice data between the controlling means and the at least one remotely located shopping terminal;

means for remotely ordering goods to be gathered by store personnel at the shopping establishment; and

means for communicating with the at least one remotely located shopping terminal over the Internet.

15. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 14, ~~wherein~~ the controlling means comprises:

means for starting and restarting the operation of the shopping system;

means for terminating the operation of the shopping system;

means for displaying the operational status of the shopping system;

means for controlling the day-to-day operations and maintenance tasks of the shopping system;

means for displaying the status of communications related to the shopping system;

means for preparing the shopping system to accept an upcoming day's transactions;

means for transferring price data files from the POS system to the controller; and

means for allowing a system operator to disable checking on transactions by the controller so as to speed up checkout processing during busy periods.

16. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 14, ~~wherein~~ the controlling means comprises means for processing transactions related to the shopping establishment including start of day processing, normal store processing, end of day processing and overnight processing.

17. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 14, ~~wherein~~ the means for remotely ordering goods is used to generate a picking list from a home computing terminal having access to the Internet.

18. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the shopping terminal is a portable terminal, the portable terminal comprising means for freely associating with a corresponding communications network.

19. (Currently Amended) The shopping system according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the shopping terminal comprises means for fingerprint identification.

20-22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A method for shopping at a shopping establishment having a centrally-controlled shopping system for processing shopping transactions and orders from shopping establishment and remote locations, the centrally-controlled shopping system having a point-of-sale (POS) system located in the shopping establishment, at least one establishment or remotely located portable shopping terminal, and a controller in communication with the POS system and the at least one terminal via at least one communications network, the method comprising:

associating the terminal with the at least one network and a customer, ~~wherein~~ the terminal is a bar code storage device for reading bar codes from a hardcopy source, storing the bar codes, and transferring the bar codes to the controller over the at least one network;

monitoring customer activity in product sales areas in the shopping establishment via one or more proximity sensors coupled to the controller to trigger a theft condition;

scanning one or more items to be purchased using the terminal;

triggering a theft condition after failure to detect a product scan within a predetermined period of time after activation of one or more sensors;

returning the terminal to the terminal receptacle;

collecting a receipt corresponding to the scanned items; and

purchasing the scanned items at a customer check-out station.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23, ~~wherein~~ the associating checking-in by a customer at a customer entry station comprises;

authorizing the at least one terminal for use by the customer; and

obtaining the authorized terminal from a terminal receptacle.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23, ~~wherein~~ the associating comprises freely associating the terminal with the at least one network.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising:

generating a shopping list from a remote location;

forwarding the shopping list to the controller;

generating a picking list at the controller corresponding to items identified in the shopping list; and

collecting the items identified in the picking list for check-out or delivery.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising:

generating a shopping list from a remote location;

forwarding the shopping list to the controller;

generating a picking list at the controller corresponding to items identified in the shopping list;

assigning a picking list ID barcode to the picking list;

printing a label showing the picking list ID barcode;

scanning the items corresponding to the picking list; and

collecting the scanned items for check-out or delivery.

28-38. (Cancelled)

39. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the proximity sensors are affixed to at least one self in a product area and are activated upon removal of a product from the self.

40. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 39, ~~wherein~~ activation of a proximity sensor triggers a status identifier that signifies that the system anticipates a product to be scanned by the portable shopping terminal.

41. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 40, ~~wherein~~ the theft condition is triggered after failure to detect a product scan within a predetermined period of time after activation of one or more sensors..

42. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the controller activates one of an alarm and a camera upon receipt of a theft condition.

43. (Currently Amended) A personal shopping system for servicing customers at shopping establishment and remote locations over at least one communications network, the shopping system comprising:

at least one point-of-sale (POS) system located in the shopping establishment;

at least one establishment or remotely located portable shopping terminal ~~for acquiring~~ that acquires shopping related data, the at least one shopping terminal comprises a scanning system comprising a wearable computer processor and a wearable scanning device; and

a centrally located controller for communicating with the POS system and the at least one shopping terminal via the at least one network, processing the shopping related data, and controlling shopping transactions engaged in by the customers.

44. (Currently Amended) The shopping system of claim 43, ~~wherein~~ the scanning system further comprises a headset including a speaker and a miniature display for providing audio, graphical and video information.

45. (Currently Amended) A personal shopping system ~~for servicing~~ that services customers at one or more shopping establishments and remote locations over at least one communications network, the shopping system comprising:

at least one point-of-sale (POS) system located in the shopping establishment;

at least one establishment or remotely located portable shopping terminal ~~for acquiring~~ that acquires shopping related data; and

a centrally located controller ~~for communicating~~ that communicates with the POS system and the at least one shopping terminal via the at least one network, ~~processing~~ processes the shopping related data, and ~~controlling~~ controls shopping transactions engaged in by the customers, the controller including at least one computer executable instruction that generates a theft condition upon expiration of a time period that starts after receipt of a signal from the proximity sensor, the controller comprising:

means for starting and restarting operation of the shopping system;

means for terminating operation of the shopping system;

means for displaying operational status of the shopping system;

means for controlling the day-to-day operations and maintenance tasks of the shopping system;

means for displaying the status of communications related to the shopping system;

means for preparing the shopping system to accept an upcoming day's transactions;

means for transferring price data files from the POS system to the controller; and

means for allowing a system operator to disable checking on transactions by the controller so as to speed up checkout processing during busy periods.

46. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23, ~~wherein~~ the theft condition is triggered after the terminal fails to detect a product scan within a predetermined period of time after activation of one or more sensors.

47. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising the controller activating one of an alarm and a camera upon receipt of a theft condition.